



Supreme Court of Illinois

February 15, 2019

ILLINOIS SUPREME COURT APPOINTS JOEL POWLESS AS RESIDENT JUDGE IN FOURTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

Chief Justice Lloyd A. Karmeier and the Illinois Supreme Court have announced the appointment of Joel J.C. Powless as a Resident Circuit Judge, Clay County, in the Fourth Judicial Circuit.

Mr. Powless is being appointed to fill the vacancy created by the retirement of the Hon. Wm. Robin Todd on January 18, 2019.

"Just as the people of Clay County expressed their confidence in Mr. Powless when they elected him their state's attorney, his appointment today as the county's Resident Circuit Judge reflects the court's confidence that he will make an outstanding judge," Chief Justice Karmeier said. "His training, background and commitment to his community make him well suited for the position. I have every faith that he will carry out his responsibilities with dignity, fairness, a commitment to justice, and respect for all who appear before him."

The appointment takes effect on March 1, 2019, and will conclude on December 7, 2020, when the vacancy will be filled by the winner of the November 2020 general election.

"I am honored and humbled by the appointment. I want to thank Chief Justice Karmeier, his appointment committee, and the Supreme Court for their confidence in me, and for entrusting me with this tremendous responsibility," Powless said. "I really look forward to serving the people of Clay County."

Chief Justice Karmier recommended the appointment to the full Court following a review of applicants by a six-person screening committee consisting of lawyers who reside in the Fourth Judicial Circuit. The members of the committee were Paul Bishop, Barry D. Bright, Christopher Daniels, Wayne County State's Attorney Kevin Kakac, Aaron Leonard, and Sherri Tungate.

Mr. Powless has served as Clay County State's Attorney since 2016. Prior to election to that post, he worked in private practice for four years and served as a municipal hearing officer for the City of Flora. Powless has also been admitted to the bar of the Commonwealth of Kentucky where he served as a part-time Assistant Commonwealth Attorney and briefly practiced with a law firm in Benton, Kentucky.

Mr. Powless graduated *magna cum laude* from Florida Gulf Coast University and earned his *Juris Doctor* from the St. Thomas University School of Law. He also holds an L.L.M. in taxation from the University of Miami School of Law.

The Fourth Judicial Circuit encompasses nine counties: Christian, Clay, Clinton, Effingham, Fayette, Jasper, Marion, Montgomery and Shelby.

—30—

(FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT: Chris Bonjean, Communications Director to the Illinois Supreme Court at 312.793.2323 or cbonjean@illinoiscourts.gov.)